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SUBJECT: TFLE01 CHIRAC ANNOUNCES EMERGENCY AID TO LEBANON;
CALLS FOR "HUMANITARIAN CORRIDOR"

¶1. SUMMARY: After meeting with the Cabinet on July 19, President Chirac announced France would be sending emergency aid to Lebanon and calls for "humanitarian corridors" to be opened. Chirac said that the GoF was cooperating closely with Lebanese officials on their needs. He also took the opportunity to stress the GoF's plea for a "humanitarian truce" and the conditions necessary to move beyond the current situation. France, he said, would continue to work with the international community towards a cessation of violence. END SUMMARY

¶2. President Chirac met with his key cabinet members on July 19, before making a presidential statement on the situation in Lebanon. In his declaration he reiterated the G8 text, called for the liberation of Israeli soldiers, an end to rocket attacks into Israel, and an end to all targeting of civilian infrastructure in Lebanon. Regarding Palestine, he insisted that dialogue with PA President Abbas, needed to be restarted. Chirac reiterated the need to implement UNSCR 1559, and for the Lebanese government to take control over its entire territory. Re-establishment of authority, stability and the sovereignty of Lebanon was the only way to assure peaceful, democratic governance.

¶3. The President called particular attention to the humanitarian situation in Lebanon, citing destruction of civilian infrastructure, including places of food production and milk for children. Chirac announced that France, working with Lebanese authorities, would be sending emergency aid via aircraft today, July 19. The GoF would also be keeping large ships in the area, now being used for evacuations, as a possible means for the transport of humanitarian supplies.

¶4. "Humanitarian corridors," Chirac said, needed to be opened immediately. The safe movement of displaced persons and emergency supplies inside the country was vital. In

addition, a corridor from Cyprus to Lebanon for humanitarian purposes needed to be put in place. These safe passages were essential to the well being of the Lebanese people.

15. Chirac closed by offering the Lebanese people France's moral support, but also all means possible for humanitarian relief.

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